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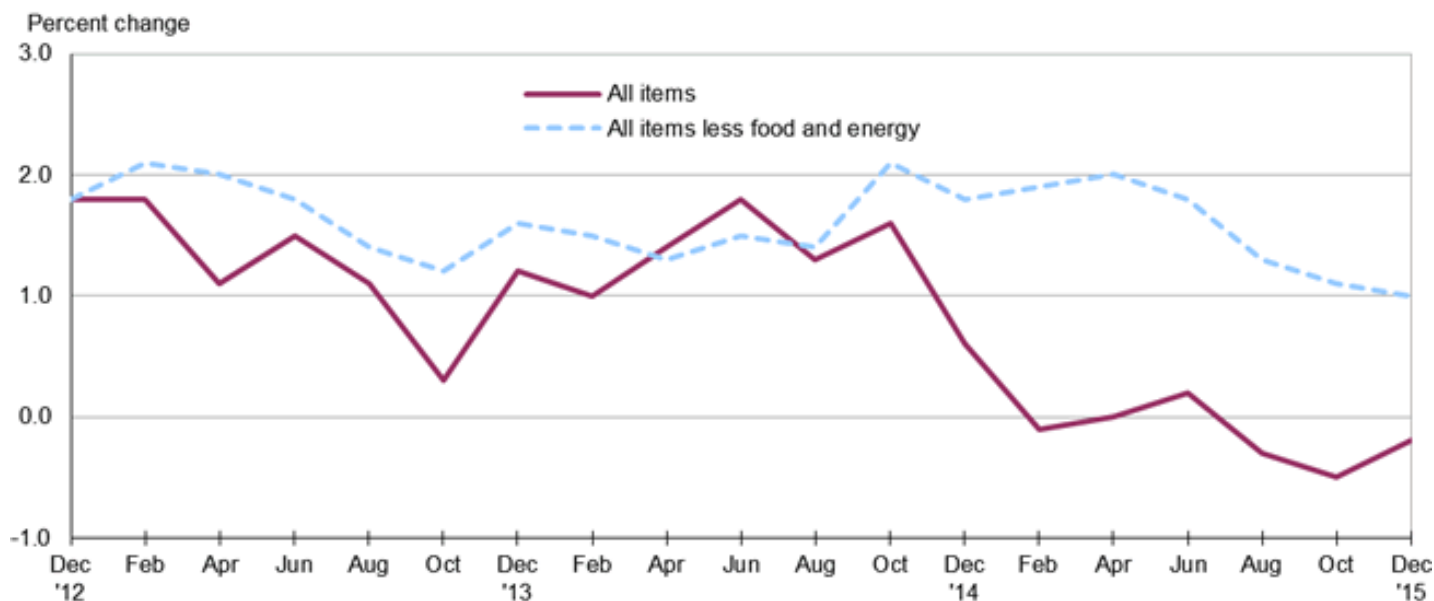
Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City – December 2015

Area prices down 0.6 percent since October and 0.2 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City declined 0.6 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent decrease reflected lower prices for all items less food and energy (-0.5 percent) and energy (-1.8 percent). The food index was unchanged since October. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U decreased 0.2 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) A 13.5-percent drop in the energy index was moderated by a 1.0-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index and a 0.8-percent increase in the food index since December 2014. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia, December 2012–December 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Following a 0.4-percent increase from August to October, the food index was unchanged over the last two months. Prices for food away from home inched up 0.1 percent while those for food at home were unchanged since October. Within the food at home component, higher prices for various items including other fresh fruits and eggs were offset by lower prices for frozen and freeze dried prepared foods and citrus fruits, among others.

The food index rose 0.8 percent over the year, as prices for both components also increased. Prices for food away from home advanced 1.3 percent and those for food at home increased 0.5 percent since last December.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 1.8 percent since October. Leading the decrease were lower prices for gasoline and utility (piped) gas service, down 2.0 and 4.5 percent, respectively. Prices for electricity inched up 0.1 percent over the last two months.

Energy prices fell 13.5 percent since December 2014, due mostly to a 20.4-percent drop in gasoline prices. Utility (piped) gas service and electricity prices were also lower, down 16.7 and 2.2 percent, respectively, over the year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.5 percent since October, reflecting lower prices for apparel (-9.7 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-1.0 percent), among others. Moderating the two-month decrease in the all items less food and energy index was an increase in prices for shelter (0.1 percent).

Since December 2014, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.0 percent. The advance was due largely to an over-the-year increase in the shelter index, up 1.5 percent, as the owners' equivalent rent of residences index was up 1.6 percent. Higher prices for medical care (2.9 percent) also contributed to the rise. Lower prices for apparel (-2.9 percent), among others, helped to moderate the increase in the all items less food and energy index since last December.

Table A. Philadelphia CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
February	1.3	1.9	0.7	2.2	0.7	1.8	0.5	1.0	-0.2	-0.1
April	1.0	2.5	0.8	2.0	0.1	1.1	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.0
June	0.6	2.8	-0.2	1.3	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.2
August	0.7	3.4	0.9	1.4	0.5	1.1	0.0	1.3	-0.5	-0.3
October	-0.3	3.0	0.4	2.2	-0.4	0.3	-0.1	1.6	-0.3	-0.5
December	-0.5	2.8	-0.9	1.8	0.1	1.2	-0.8	0.6	-0.6	-0.2

The Consumer Price Index for February 2016 is scheduled to be released Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 8:30 am (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City is published bi-monthly. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.





































The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.







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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Dec. 2015	Dec. 2014	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015
All items		243.697		242.356	-0.2	-0.6	
All items (1967 = 100)		704.027		700.153			
Food and beverages		233.157		233.378	0.6	0.1	
Food		233.724		233.752	0.8	0.0	
Food at home		245.062	246.613	244.977	0.5	0.0	-0.7
Food away from home		213.132		213.285	1.3	0.1	
Alcoholic beverages		223.350		226.018	-2.2	1.2	
Housing		249.367		248.974	0.2	-0.2	
Shelter		308.532	308.771	308.915	1.5	0.1	0.0
Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾		287.142	287.681	288.295	1.2	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences ⁽¹⁾ ^{(2) (3)}		316.693	317.259	317.682	1.6	0.3	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2) (3)}		316.693	317.259	317.682	1.6	0.3	0.1
Fuels and utilities		200.366		197.644	-6.0	-1.4	
Household energy		167.073	166.884	164.211	-8.0	-1.7	-1.6
Gas (piped) and electricity ⁽¹⁾		178.948	179.322	176.937	-6.4	-1.1	-1.3
Electricity ⁽¹⁾		190.195	190.724	190.407	-2.2	0.1	-0.2
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾		148.600	148.628	141.896	-16.7	-4.5	-4.5
Household furnishings and operations		114.727		113.523	-2.1	-1.0	
Apparel		112.966		102.026	-2.9	-9.7	
Transportation		197.345		196.131	-5.1	-0.6	
Private transportation		195.683		195.185	-5.0	-0.3	
Motor fuel		193.621	195.593	189.696	-20.5	-2.0	-3.0
Gasoline (all types)		190.928	192.886	187.087	-20.4	-2.0	-3.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁴⁾		187.770	189.766	183.854	-21.2	-2.1	-3.1
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{(4) (5)}		197.941	199.546	195.073	-17.7	-1.4	-2.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁴⁾		197.407	199.138	193.853	-16.1	-1.8	-2.7
Medical care		491.488		489.480	2.9	-0.4	
Recreation ⁽⁶⁾		123.489		123.357	0.2	-0.1	
Education and communication ⁽⁶⁾		134.707		134.427	1.1	-0.2	
Other goods and services		509.286		502.938	1.1	-1.2	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		175.533		172.518	-2.9	-1.7	
Commodities less food and beverages		144.176		139.812	-5.3	-3.0	
Nondurables less food and beverages		178.493		172.022	-6.6	-3.6	
Durables		105.129		103.074	-3.0	-2.0	
Services		313.095		313.248	1.2	0.0	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		222.780		220.708	-1.2	-0.9	
All items less medical care		233.297		231.986	-0.5	-0.6	
Commodities less food		147.013		142.861	-5.2	-2.8	
Nondurables		206.463		203.045	-2.8	-1.7	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Dec. 2015	Dec. 2014	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015
Nondurables less food.....		181.123		175.192	-6.3	-3.3	
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾		324.981		324.847	0.8	0.0	
Services less medical care services.....		299.102		299.494	1.1	0.1	
Energy		176.888	177.493	173.634	-13.5	-1.8	-2.2
All items less energy		252.897		251.757	0.9	-0.5	
All items less food and energy		258.771		257.405	1.0	-0.5	

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) This index series underwent a change in composition in January 2010. The expenditure class now includes weight from secondary residences, and has been re-titled "Owners' equivalent rent of residences." The item stratum "Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence" excludes secondary residences.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.